

MMS HSA
Tips to Help Your Student with Learning Needs at MMS

March 2018

Address: Maplewood Middle School
 7 Burnet Street
 Maplewood, NJ 07040

Main Number: (973) 378-7660, x3000 for main office

Absence Line: (973) 378-7660, option 1

School Hours: 8:12am-3:05pm, 4 Hour Day 8:12am-12:30pm

Welcome to Maplewood Middle School!

- When your child moves to the middle school, they are assigned to a teaching team. Each grade has up to three teams, depending on the size of the graduating class. There is a homeroom teacher identified who is usually the point of contact for notices, field trip forms, and general school correspondence. You will receive this information shortly before the start of the school year, along with your child's schedule.
 - The first day for 6th grade follows more of an orientation where they go through their new schedule, get their locker assignment, meet their teachers, and get to practice the bell schedule.
 - If anxiety about the new building, gym lockers, etc., is a concern, you can contact the building administration (Ms. Gronau, the principal, or one of the assistant principals) to request a walk-through with/for your child before the start of the school year. If they are able, they will arrange for this.

IEP/504

- If your child has an IEP (Independent Education Program), she or he will also be assigned a case manager. You should receive their letter of introduction shortly before the start of the school year. Mr. Patterson, an Assistant Principal is the building administrator who oversees IEPs at MMS.
- If your child has a 504 Plan, the Plan will be overseen by a building administrator (Mr. Brown, an Assistant Principal at MMS). This will be communicated to you before the start of the school year.
- At the start of the year, send with your child, or have your child share with their teachers, an easy to read info sheet about your child. Send a copy to the child study team/504 Plan administrator, too. Items to include:
 - strengths and weaknesses
 - supports
 - accommodations/modifications
 - goals and objectives
 - your contact info
 - your child's likes and hobbies
 - successful classroom strategies.

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- Attached is an example of an Info Sheet for your review.
- Additionally, after the first week or so, you might send a quick email to your child's teachers introducing yourself and letting them know you're available if they have any questions or concerns. If there are any issues cropping up, bring them to the teacher(s) attention as soon as possible to they can be proactively addressed.
- Contact your child's teacher(s) with any classroom questions. Most teachers maintain webpages where students can find homework assignments and support material. Teachers usually distribute their website info during the first few days of school.

Guidance Counselors and Social Workers

- Social workers and/or guidance counselors will be your lifeline at times. They are able to arrange for private meetings during the day with your child to help talk through any issues and develop strategies with your child to address them. They are the best "eyes" on them during free time (lunch, hallways), and can alert parents to unusual behavior or situations before they became issues.
 - Kids can stop by the guidance office and sign-in to see someone as needed. There is a sign in just inside the office entrance, in the waiting area. The guidance office is across from the main office.
 - Parents/caregivers are welcome to contact guidance or your child's social worker with concerns or questions. All children are assigned to a guidance counselor and this person's name is indicated on your child's PowerSchool profile, or at the top right corner of their report card. They are on top of things and responsive. Some of the reasons to contact guidance or the social worker include:
 - scheduling issues
 - behavioral changes
 - stressful or negative peer interactions
 - family issues that may effect your child at school

School Nurse

- Ms. Porter is the MMS Nurse. Please contact Ms. Porter with regard to any medical needs your child may have at jporter@somds.k12.nj.us

Student Support

- There are programs at MMS to help students struggling with academic and/or mental health issues. Please contact Ms. Gronau for information about the Saturday Academy which supports students academic needs, and the IStep program which provides mental health support.

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Youthnet and The HUB

- Youthnet provides after-school enrichment and clubs for MMS and SOMS students for a nominal fee. Clubs and activities are announced seasonally via a flyer sent home in the backpacks or in MMS HSA weekly eblast. Information can be found at <http://www.somayouthnet.org>
- The HUB is managed by Family Connections. It is a school based youth services program. Their brochure can be found at [www.mmshsa.org/uploads/3/7/2/8/37287067/the_hub_brochure_2014 - v2 - 10-6-14.pdf](http://www.mmshsa.org/uploads/3/7/2/8/37287067/the_hub_brochure_2014_-_v2_-_10-6-14.pdf)

PowerSchool

- Be sure to create your PowerSchool account once you receive your access information. Please contact Ms. Gronau if you need this resent to you. This is one of the best ways to stay on top their class schedule, homework assignments & projects, and to follow up on missing work. Teachers make an effort to keep information current. You will be able to see attendance, tardiness, grades, and missing or late assignments, projects or tests. This helps inform conversations with your child and/or your child's teachers. If you click on the grade for the class, it opens up a detailed list of assignments. The phone app is more limited, but good for "at a glance" information.
 - Your child will be given their own PowerSchool access in 6th grade.

Special Services in SOMSD

- The Department of Special Services has been updating the district website with information about special services in the district. Contact and policy information can be found at: <https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/domain/32>
- 504 Plans are administered in each school building in the district. Information about 504 Plans can be found at: <https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/Page/4303>

Who to Contact at MMS

- Classes/Scheduling issues or conflicts: Guidance or one of the Assistant Principals. The administration really tries to accommodate each and every child to the best they are able with regard to scheduling.
- IEP: Assigned case manager
 - If you are having trouble reaching your case manager, you can contact
 - Ms. Gronau, the Principal, dgronau@somsd.k12.nj.us
 - Mr. Patterson, Assistant Principal, DPatters@somsd.k12.nj.us
 - the district Special Services Supervisor for grades 6-12
- 504 Plan: Identified building administrator
 - Mr. Brown, Assistant Principal, lbrown@somsd.k12.nj.us
- School Nurse: Ms. Porter, jporter@somsd.k12.nj.us

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Parent Support:

- The Special Ed PTO and SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Committee) are represented in each district school building by a Special Education Liaison, who is a member of the school PTA/HSA. At MMS, the Liaison can be found on the HSA board list at www.mmshsa.org
 - The 2017/2018 Special Ed Liaison is Sonya Selig (sonyaselig@gmail.com)
 - The proposed 2018/2019 Special Ed Liaison is Kiersten Carlson-Williams (lissenden@verizon.net)
 - The Liaison assists families with special education information and resources, and helps connect families within the MMS community for specific one-to-one support.
- There is a support group for twice exceptional children (gifted with learning needs) in the district called SOMA 2e. Meetings are held monthly. Please contact Sonya Selig (sonyaselig@gmail.com) for more information.
- Facebook: The Special Ed PTO (SOMA Special Education Community), SOMA 2e, and Maplewood Middle School Families each maintain closed Facebook groups – all are invited join them!
- Information about the SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Committee) can be found at www.sepacsoma.org
- The Parenting Center hosts a speaker series, with some amazing guest speakers, along with a variety of support groups to help families in our community, including: the Special Ed PTO, SOMA 2e, ADHD/ADD, Anxiety, and Selective Mutism. Information can be found at: www.theparentingcenter.info
- MMS Home School Association (MMS HSA) www.mmshsa.org

Identification for Services

- If you think your child might qualify for support services, please see the SEPAC's 'A Guide to the Special Education Process' for detailed information on the special education process in SOMSD. It can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-g3VnNv23MCGxSbTY3bXhHY28/view>

Parent Tips

- BINDERS! Keeping key information together in one place where family members and your student know where to find it saves time and stress!
 - IEP or 504 binder, with tabs for: documents such as “communication”, “testing/evals”, “IEP/504 Plan”, “work samples”, “report cards”, etc. This is very helpful when communicating with teachers or the child study team/504 coordinator.
 - MMS binder, with tabs for: general information about the school such as teacher contact info, class schedule and teacher information, bell schedule, building contact info, district calendar, Youthnet/Hub info, field trip permission slips, MMS musical info sheets, etc.

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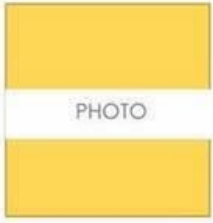
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- You may want to consider purchasing a “Caselt” binder system for your child to use for school (Amazon, Staples, etc.). It is a 3-ring zippered binder with pockets and, in some models, an enclosed expanding file. You can color code classes with different pocket folders, sorted in order of their class schedule, and there is still room for a zippered pencil case, spiral notebooks and their agenda. It’s a great way of keeping everything in one place during the day, as students are not permitted to carry their backpacks around in the building.
 - Alternately, your child may prefer to keep two smaller binders - one for their morning classes, and another for afternoon classes, which they can swap out when they break for lunch.

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Example of an IEP/504 Info Sheet

<h2>MY IEP ACCOMODATIONS</h2>		
 <p>PHOTO</p>	<p>Name: Grade: Home Room Name: Contact: @gmail.com Ph: 404 000 000</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MY STRENGTHS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VISUAL LEARNER• LISTENING COMPREHENSION• CURIOUS• OPTIMISTIC• OUT OF THE BOX THINKER <p style="text-align: center;"><u>MY STRUGGLES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WRITTEN EXPRESSION• ORGANIZING AND PUTTING DOWN MY IDEAS ON PAPER• I KNOW MY GRAMMER IN THEORY BUT STUGGLE TO FOLLOW PUNCTUATIONS AND CAPITALIZATION WHEN ASKED TO WRITE• DRAWINGS• ORGANIZATION• FOCUS <p style="text-align: center;"><u>I LOVE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• READING• SCIENCE• MYSTERY AND MAGIC• SCUBA DIVING• RIDDLE BOOKS• NATURE DOCUMENTERIES• DOGS
<p><u>MY INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMODATIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extra time for Responses• Provide warning prior to calling my name in class• Access to word prediction software• Written responses may be typed instead of hand written• Visual schedule chart for Multi Step Assignments• Seated near the source of Instruction• Clarify/ Repeat any Classroom Instructions• Frequent checks to maintain focus in class• Access my text books online• Note Taking Alternatives		
<p><u>MY TESTING ACCOMODATIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain or paraphrase directions for clarity• Extended time - 50%• Preferential Seating• Repetition of Directions• Small Group		
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MY GOALS THIS YEAR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LEARNING HOW TO TYPE MORE WORDS/MIN• LEARNING NOTE TAKING METHODS• LEARNING HOW TO SELF ADVOCATE• LEARN HOW TO BE ORGANIZED		